

REMARKS

Applicants Statement of Substance of Interview

Applicants wish to express appreciation to Examiner Vikkram Bali for the courtesy of a personal interview which was granted to Applicants' representative Sanford T. Colb (Reg. No. 26,856) at the USPTO on January 16, 2007. The Examiner's statement of the substance of the interview is set forth in the Interview Summary, numbered Paper No. 20070116. At the interview, a proposed amended claim 1 was discussed vis-à-vis the prior art of Meisberger. Mr. Colb explained the distinctions between the proposed amended claim 1 and the Meisberger reference.

General Remarks

Claims 1-16 are pending in the application. Claims 1 and 9 are amended. Claims 2-8 and 10-16 are unchanged. Support for the amendments to claims 1 and 9 is found in Figs. 1, 30A-30C, 31 and 32A-32B and in the specification at paragraph [0184] of the Patent Application Publication, *inter alia*.

Applicant has carefully studied the outstanding Office Action in the present application. The present response is intended to be fully responsive to all points of rejection raised by the Examiner and is believed to place the application in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance of the application are respectfully requested.

Claims Rejections

Claims 1-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Meisberger et al. (5,578,821).

Meisberger et al. shows and describes an electron beam inspection system and method having two modes of operation: die-to-die and die-to-database. In die-to-database inspection the signal from one die derived from an electron microscope is compared with a signal that is derived from a database.

Applicant has amended claim 1 as proposed at the interview. Claim 1, as amended, recites, in relevant part, "performing reference based inspection of electrical circuitry to be inspected including ... using a selected inspection task employing information defining said portion of interest and additional inspection information relevant to said portion of interest, said inspection task being

selected from among a plurality of different inspection tasks in response to the type of local characteristic expected to occur in the portion of interest." Similar amendments have been made to claim 9.

In addition to performing basic reference based inspection, the present invention, as recited in amended claims 1 and 9, also identifies specific features in the circuit (types of local characteristics) and applies inspection selected specific algorithms which are relevant to those features (different inspection tasks in response to different types of local characteristics). An example from the specification is identifying a specific feature which is a ball in a ball grid array and employing an inspection task employing information defining the ball and additional inspection information relevant to inspection of balls. (Paragraphs [0338]-[0349] of the Patent Application Publication)

Meisberger does not show or suggest an electrical circuitry inspection method or apparatus including, inter alia, performing reference based inspection of electrical circuitry to be inspected and using an inspection task that includes information defining a portion of interest and additional inspection information, where the inspection task is selected from among a plurality of different inspection tasks, as recited in claims 1 and 9. Meisberger also does not show or suggest selecting an inspection task in response to a type of local characteristic expected to occur in the portion of interest that is currently being inspected, as recited in amended claims 1 and 9.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw rejection of independent claims 1 and 9, and their dependent claims 2-8 and 10-16, each of which is patentable at least by virtue of its dependency from a patentable main claim.

Conclusion and request for telephone interview

In view of the foregoing, this application is believed to be in order. Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly invited to contact the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

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